



Department of Justice

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SIX ARRESTED ON DRUG TRAFFICKING CHARGES IN BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA

BATON ROUGE, LA – United States Attorney David R. Dugas announced today that DEA and ATF, working with local law enforcement agencies, have made arrests in three major drug trafficking cases in the Baton Rouge area over the last several weeks.

ANDRES LOYA-PALMA and ROGELIO LOPEZ-FERNANDEZ

On October 25, 2007, a criminal complaint was signed by U.S. Magistrate Judge Docia L. Dalby of the Middle District of Louisiana charging ANDRES LOYA-PALMA and ROGELIO LOPEZ-FERNANDEZ with conspiracy to possess with the intent to distribute 500 grams or more of cocaine and with possession with intent to distribute 500 grams or more of cocaine. LOPEZ-FERNANDEZ has also been charged with carrying a firearm during and in relation to a drug trafficking crime. The complaint charges that a DEA Confidential Source negotiated the purchase of three kilograms of cocaine from LOYA-PALMA. During the undercover operation and subsequent arrests, agents seized approximately five kilograms of suspected cocaine HCL and one firearm. The conspiracy and drug distribution charges carry a sentence of not less than five years and not more than 40 years in prison. The firearms charge carries a sentence of not less than five years and up to life in prison, with the firearms sentence to run consecutively to any sentence imposed on the drug trafficking charges.

The cocaine seized as a result of this investigation is suspected of having been recently smuggled into the United States from Mexico. The United States Attorney's Office requested that Judge Dalby detain the individuals. The defendants stipulated to detention and are incarcerated based on an order of the Court. Prosecution of this case is being pursued by the United States Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Louisiana.

LARRY COLEMAN

In October 2007, the Baton Rouge Resident Office of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives began a joint investigation with the Baton Rouge Police Department – Narcotics Division, into alleged drug trafficking activities of Baton Rouge resident LARRY COLEMAN. On October 24, 2007, a Criminal Complaint was signed by U.S. Magistrate Judge Docia L. Dalby charging COLEMAN with possession with the intent

to distribute and distribution of five grams or more of cocaine base, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 841(a)(1). In addition, the Complaint charges that COLEMAN, having been convicted of a crime punishable by imprisonment for a term exceeding one year, a felony, knowingly possessed a firearm, that is, a Taurus, Model 689, .357 caliber revolver, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 922(g)(1). If convicted, the defendant faces a sentence of not less than 5 years and not more than 40 years in prison.

JESUS FACUNDO, TILICUIS IRVIN and BRIAN MAXSON

On September 18, 2007, U.S. Magistrate Judge Docia L. Dalby signed a Criminal Complaint charging TILLICUIS IRVIN, a resident of Darrow, Louisiana, JESUS FACUNDO, a resident of Pearland, Texas, and BRIAN MAXSON with conspiracy to possess with the intent to distribute and to distribute five kilograms or more of cocaine in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 846; and possession with the intent to distribute five kilograms or more of cocaine, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 841(a)(1). These charges resulted from an investigation by a DEA Task Force that began in May 2007 into alleged illegal narcotics activities in the Middle District of Louisiana of IRVIN, FACUNDO, MAXSON, and others. The complaint charges that a DEA Confidential Source (CS) revealed that IRVIN negotiated the lease of a residence in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, to be utilized as a storage/distribution facility for FACUNDO, who would become IRVIN's source of supply. In the Complaint, FACUNDO was identified as having ties to Mexican and Colombian narcotics trafficking organizations, and has previously been identified as the main supplier for high level narcotics traffickers in Baton Rouge. During the undercover operation and subsequent arrests, agents seized approximately ten kilograms of cocaine, two firearms, and approximately \$55,000 in U.S. currency.

On September 27, 2007, a federal grand jury returned an indictment with the following charges. FACUNDO was charged in the indictment with two counts of conspiracy to possess with the intent to distribute and distribution of five kilograms or more of cocaine in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 846; and two counts of possession with the intent to distribute and distribution of five kilograms or more of cocaine, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 841(a)(1). IRVIN was charged in the indictment with one count of maintaining drug-involved premises in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 841(a)(1); one count of conspiracy to possess with the intent to distribute and distribution of five kilograms or more of cocaine in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 846; one count of possession with the intent to distribute and distribution of five kilograms or more of cocaine, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 841(a)(1); one count of possession of firearms in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 924(c)(1)(A); and one count of possession of firearms by a convicted felon in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 922(g). MAXSON was charged in the indictment with one count of conspiracy to possess with the intent to distribute and distribution of five kilograms or more of cocaine in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 846; and one count of possession with the intent to distribute and distribution of five kilograms or more of cocaine, in violation of Title 21, United States

Code, Section 841(a)(1). If convicted, the defendants face a sentence of a term of imprisonment of not less than 10 years and up to life.

NOTE: A complaint is merely an accusation by a law enforcement official, and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty at trial.

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